

# The Steel Strike Is Connected With Poverty

**Industrial Relations Commission Made Public a Report On the Recent Strike at Youngstown, Ohio.**

Washington.—The Industrial Relations Commission, now an unofficial body, today made public a report on the recent strike of steel workers at East Youngstown, O., holding economic conditions of the laborers was at the bottom of the strike and subsequent fatal rioting.

For years, the report says, there was a surplus of unskilled labor in and about Youngstown and the average laborer had no alternative but accept working conditions and wages that were fixed by the steel companies.

## Shortage Among Laborers.

For the first time there now is a shortage of such labor and the laborers took advantage of that fact to strike for better working conditions, the report stated.

The report says living conditions among the foreigners have been very bad; that living and sleeping rooms have been over-crowded; that health and sanitation precautions have been practically unknown with the result of a high death rate, especially among children.

Average annual earnings among the

unskilled workers have been too low properly to support a family, the report says.

## Many Keep Boarders.

Sixty-five per cent of the families kept boarders and 3.4 persons occupied each sleeping room.

The rioting in East Youngstown which resulted in the death of one man, wounding of 25 others and destruction of \$1,000,000 of property, is attributed to "the hasty action of the company guards in opening fire on the crowd of strikers that surrounded the gate."

Discussing living conditions among the foreign-born, unskilled laborers, the report says:

"The men lived in squalid, crowded rooms. Overcrowding and poor diet spread trachoma, a disease always associated with dire poverty. Homes were surrounded with piles of exposed garbage, indescribably filthy, yards, streets and alleys in which the children of the workers play."

Geo. West, Secretary of the Commission passed several days at East Youngstown during the trouble.

## COMPENSATION FUND IS STABLE

Columbus, O.—The state industrial commission, in a special report, shows in detail the absolute stability of the compensation fund and its ability to protect hundreds of thousands of employees and thousands of employers, despite the ruling of State Superintendent of Insurance Taggart, which permits private liability companies to do business in this state.

A suit to annul this rule is now pending in the supreme court, and is supported by the commission and the state federation of labor. The report declares this suit will end the contest, but the commission believes its figures show that a decision has been arrived at by employers and that their judgment is to stand by the state fund. The commission says its representatives were compelled to make personal visits to many localities and individual employers to counteract the campaign of misrepresentation carried on by opponents of state compensation.

## STEEL TRUST RAISES WAGES.

New York.—By raising the wages of common laborers 10 per cent, starting February 1, the officers of the United States Steel corporation have again shown their astuteness in interpreting mutterings of discontent.

It is stated that the average daily wage of the trust's 162,400 employees during the year 1914 was \$2.88.

It is evident that common laborers do not enjoy this average, for Youngstown, Ohio, press dispatches state that steel mill managers are fearful of strikes and are not waiting until the first of February to introduce the 10 per cent increase announced by United States Steel, but will grant it immediately in an effort to allay discontent. The Youngstown wage rate, which, mill managers insist is a high average, is 19½ cents an hour for 10 hours a day.

## "SAFETY FIRST" PROFITABLE.

Harrisburg, Pa.—"Safety first" will mean a cash dividend to every employer insured in the state workmen's insurance fund, as state factory inspectors are indirect agents for the fund. When these officials inspect a factory or store they are provided with a blank which does not merely contain information about minors, their ages, ventilation, sanitary and other labor conditions, but includes safety conditions or lack of safety conditions. The reports are filed with the bureau of statistics of the department of labor and industry, where they are available for the state workmen's insurance fund.

## The High Seas.

The high seas are uninclosed ocean waters three miles and more from low water mark.

## Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve had many advantages. The principal one was that they escaped teething.—MARK TWAIN.

## Ear Diseases.

It will surprise many to learn that ear diseases were studied some 3,400 years ago.

## Heirlooms.

"Did your wealthy old uncle leave many heirlooms?" "Oh, yes. A near heir looms up every week."—Exchange.

## London's Oldest Church.

St. Bartholomew's Priory Church, Smithfield, is the oldest church in London, dating from 1123.

## JAPS IN CANNING INDUSTRY

Olympia, Wash.—In a special report on the salmon canning industry in this state, the bureau of labor says the employment of Chinese has gradually decreased since the passage of the Chinese exclusion act, and that Japanese are filling the places vacated. It is declared that "the people in general have greater antipathy toward the Japs," which is shared to some extent by the cannery owners "for the reason that the Japs are not nearly as trustworthy and reliable as the brown-hued brother of the Celestial race. Moreover they are not as amenable to the requirements of the employer, and quarrelsome among themselves, as well as less efficient in their work."

The report states that the average "run" of salmon seldom exceeds a period of sixty days' duration and that when the fish are caught they must be canned almost immediately to prevent spoilage. This necessitates an adequate supply of labor constantly available on the premises so that operations may be started at a moment's notice when the first load of fish arrives.

These conditions, the report continues, "are perhaps responsible for the birth of the Chinese labor contract system which has been so pronounced in years past in this industry."

The bureau of labor believes white labor can be secured for this work, and points to the hundreds of settlers whose limited means make it necessary for them to secure outside employment in order to maintain themselves and their families while clearing and developing their lands ready for crops. Other seasonal workers could also be secured with the aid of the federal and state governments.

It is pointed out that the question confronting the cannerymen is to promptly secure sufficient labor, and that the cannerymen's views have moderated since the Jap has appeared on the scene. Attention is called to the work of the federal department of labor in securing workers for the fruit and berry fields.

As a solution for conditions in the canning industry, it is stated that:

"The employment of white labor can be largely accelerated by the assistance of the federal labor department through its employment agency, which, in connection with the postal service, has access to laboring people living in rural districts. These people may be reached and their applications received for the work long before the canning season so that an adequate supply may be secured."

## ELECTRICAL WORKERS WIN.

Minneapolis, Minn.—The Electrical Workers' union has signed an agreement with the W. O. Hartig Electrical company after differences that existed for several months. The Hartig concern is the largest of its kind in the city and has agreed to hereafter pay the union's new rate, which is an increase of 6¼ cents an hour over the old scale.

## FREIGHT AND TALK COMPARED.

Washington.—"The railroads get on the average 7 mills a mile for moving a ton of freight. The telephone company charges 6 mills a mile for carrying a three-minute conversation," said Congressman Lewis, in a speech in the house of representatives, last Monday.

The chairman of the house committee on labor was discussing government ownership of telegraphs and telephones when he made the statement that it costs an American citizen as much for his long-distance conversation over the wires, mile for mile, as it costs him to ship a ton of freight over the rails.

"You may realize how weighty your conversation sometimes are," he said. "They weigh about a ton on the long-distance wires." The speaker pointed to the benefits derived from parcel post as a demonstration of what may be accomplished by the "postalization" of means of communication.

## BALLOTING ON 8-HOUR DAY.

Cleveland, O.—The question of a demand for an eight-hour day on all railroads of the United States and Canada is now in the hands of members of the four brotherhoods of conductors, engineers, trainmen and firemen. Ballots have been sent to all branches of these organizations. The vote will be canvassed in Chicago, March 1, and if favorable the demand will be placed in the hands of the executives of the brotherhoods.

## DEMAND SHORTER HOURS.

Canonsburg, Pa.—Striking employees of the steel and iron works at this place have refused to accept a wage increase of 10 cents a day. They insist on a substantial wage increase and a reduction of the workday from ten to nine hours.

## UPHOLD SMOKE ORDINANCE.

Washington.—The United States supreme court has upheld the smoke ordinance passed by Des Moines, Iowa. The court ruled that municipalities have the right to pass regulations covering this subject.

## FAVOR CHILD LABOR.

Washington.—"I'm going to send my children to the North Carolina cotton mills instead of keeping them in school," was the sarcastic declaration of a trade union official, after listening to arguments by attorneys and manufacturers before the house committee on labor in opposition to the Keating-Owen anti-child labor bill.

Attorney James Emery, whose connection with manufacturers' associations is well known, assured the committee he was against child labor. He did not approve of it, but—

This particular bill is unconstitutional and would never, never, be sustained by the courts.

A delegation of North Carolina manufacturers also expressed their disapproval of the bill. Their main objection was the ruin it would cause by putting children on the streets and debar them from enjoying the happy life of a cotton mill worker. The manufacturers deplored the lack of educational facilities in their state, which should pass a compulsory school law. Until that time, said the manufacturers, it is best to keep the children in the mills, where their interests are carefully looked after.

The Keating-Owen bill debars from interstate commerce all child labor products.

## STRIKE FORCES HIGHER WAGES

Nashua, N. H.—The 1,800 striking textile employees of the Nashua Manufacturing company and the Jackson Manufacturing company have unanimously rejected a 5 per cent wage increase and are as determined to win as the day they suspended work, over three months ago. These workers declare that the 5 per cent increase is not enough, as wages only range from between \$5 to \$10 a week. The companies are maintaining a small army of thugs which are labeled special policemen. Pinkerton detectives, also, are employed to intimidate the strikers. This strike is undoubtedly one of the chief causes for a general wage agitation now on in New England. Textile manufacturers realize that if Nashua workers succeed a 10 per cent demand will spread to other sections, and in an effort to check this movement, employers are now raising wages 5 per cent. In organized localities, however, a sentiment for 10 per cent is indicated by textile employees.

## ECHOES OF THE WAR.

When will Europe get weary of "filling up the gaps?"—New York Sun.

The news from the belligerent nations is that the fight must go on to the end. But what will be the end?—Philadelphia Press.

## The Home Doctor.

Witch hazel is an excellent lotion for large pores; also for red veiny patches.

Alcohol "baths" are thrice beneficial when the hand is substituted for the sponge of old time usage.

An instantaneous cure for hiccup, which seldom fails, is to take one teaspoonful of common vinegar.

Boils on the back of the neck are often caused by irritation of the clothing and infection of the hands. In the beginning the infection is generally about a hair root. All such hairs should be pulled out early and the spot bathed twice a day with grain alcohol.

## Waves of Water.

For over 1,200 miles the Nile does not receive a single tributary stream.

The Ganges is 1,570 miles long and drains an area of 750,000 square miles.

The San Francisco, a river of Brazil, is 1,400 miles in length and was so called because it was discovered on the feast day of St. Francis.

The Ohio River is 975 miles long. From the source of its longest tributary to the junction of the Mississippi the total length is nearly 1,500 miles.

## Town Topics.

Boston faces a bean famine. But we still have our Browning and brown bread.—Boston Herald.

New York City now has a dodo, which is a prehistoric bird, to keep company with some of its prehistoric horse cars.—Florida Times-Union.

Chicago life can not be accused of dullness when one can stand on the Madison street bridge while it is rammed by passing boats and barges.—Chicago News.

## Early Irish Kings.

Beginning from A. D. 4, seven successive kings of Ireland were all slain, four of them by their successors.

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